



National Brownfields Assessment Pilot

Navajo Nation, AZ

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

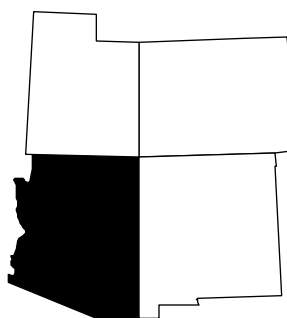
BACKGROUND

EPA selected the Navajo Nation for a Brownfields Pilot. The Tribe's 10-Year Forest Management Plan expired in 1992, eliminating access to tribal timber resources. The Navajo Forest Product Industries (NFPI) mill site in Navajo, New Mexico, closed in April 1995 because of the cost of using off-reservation timber and is now abandoned. There are 300 unemployed mill workers in the local tribal community of 2,293 people. Most NFPI employees were from the Tribe's Red Lake Chapter. The 10.5 acre site included a particle-board factory and millworks with machinery and maintenance shops. A site inspection has revealed clear evidence of potentially hazardous substances in the environment, including PCBs, acids, solvents, and batteries. Employment for local residents is needed to replace jobs lost from the closed mill.

OBJECTIVES

The Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency outlines five overall objectives: 1) identify all hazardous substances on-site or in groundwater; 2) assess public health and environmental risks; 3) educate the community about the problem; 4) develop an effective and affordable remedial design; and 5) after the two-year grant period, clean up and revitalize the NFPI industrial complex. The Navajo Nation and the local people want to lease part or all of the site facilities to

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Navajo Nation, Arizona

Date of Award:
September 1996

Amount: \$200,000

Site Profile: The Pilot targets a 10.5 acre, former timber mill site in the eastern third of the Navajo Nation

Contacts:

Lorenda Joe
Acting Director
Navajo Nation
Environmental
Protection Agency
(520) 871-7692

Steve Simanonok
U.S. EPA - Region 9
(415) 744-2358
simanonok.steve@epamail.epa.gov

Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

a lumber milling company and recall as many of the laid off employees as possible. The logging operation can take place while the new 10-Year Forest Management Plan is being developed.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot is:

- Scoping the local community's needs and concerns, including a door-to-door outreach and education campaign conducted in the Navajo language;
- Assessing the site to determine the cleanup status of each component of the NFPI facility;
- Conducting a public tribal meeting to secure a Letter of Decision commitment by the Red Lake Chapter to lease all or part of the site to help finance remediation of NFPI facility; and
- Preparing a site remediation plan.